

DISCUSSIONS

RELATIVE CLAUSES AND BINDING IN FRENCH: THE SOLUTION OF BOUCHARD (1984)

JOHAN ROORYCK

National Fund for Scientific Research (Belgium)

1. The basic aim of Bouchard 1984 is to construct a grammatical framework within GB-theory, which does not refer specifically to empty categories. In order to achieve this goal, he is forced to present an alternative analysis of French relative clauses. This analysis can be considered a variant of Pesetsky 1982, who in turn reformulates Kayne's 1976 solution for French relative clauses in the GB framework. We will try to show that the variant Bouchard develops does not give an adequate account of the elements in *COMP* position of the relative clauses in French with respect to the Binding conditions as specified by Chomsky 1981.

2. Relativization in Standard French involves movement of a *Wh*-phrase to *COMP* position.

- (1) a. *La fille*_S[_{COMP} *qui*]_i [_S *t*₁ *est venue.*]]
b. *La fille*_S[_{COMP} *que*]_i [_S *tu as vue t*₁]]

Bouchard 1984: 91 observes that two solutions are possible from a descriptive point of view. In the first solution, a *Wh*-phrase is moved to *COMP* taking the form of *qui* if it is nominative and *que* if it is accusative. This analysis has been criticized by Kayne 1976 as the "accusative alternation hypothesis." The other solution Bouchard presents is essentially Kayne's analysis adapted to GB: Kayne 1976 proposed a rule moving *NP* to *COMP* to delete it afterwards; Bouchard 1984 chooses to move an empty *Wh*-operator to *COMP*. In both cases, *que* is the complementizer *que* that

changes into *qui* in the environment of a *Wh*-subject, following the rule formulated by Pesetsky 1982.

$$[COMP \text{ } \overset{Wh_i}{\underset{t_i}{\text{que}}}] \rightarrow [COMP \text{ } \underset{i}{\text{qui}}] / - [{}_S X [\overset{t_i}{+}_{nom}] Y]$$

Relativization of *PP* moves a *Wh-PP* to *COMP* in Standard French¹, and no deletion follows. Thus far, Bouchard's analysis only reflects current assumptions in generative grammar on relativization in French.²

3. However, the analysis becomes much less convincing when Bouchard tries to relate the empty operator to Chomsky's 1981 Avoid Pronoun Principle. Bouchard 1984: 127 assumes that this operator is an anaphor since it is Bound by the head of the relative clause. Referring to his analysis of infinitival clauses,³ he interprets the *APP* not as "Avoid a lexical pronoun" but as "Avoid a pronoun where an anaphor is possible." As such, no reference to empty categories is needed. This principle should explain the unacceptability of relative clauses with resumptive pronouns in French, since an empty operator is preferred to a pronoun

- (3) a. ??*La fille qu'elle est venue*
 b. ??*La fille que Jean l' a vue* (Bouchard 1984: 126)

However, these sentences are the result of a productive process in popular French, and have been extensively dealt with by several authors (Damourette and Pichon 1911-1940: §1322; Guiraud 1966; Moignet 1974:171; Frei 1929:187).⁴ Since Bouchard tries to include Québec French into his analysis, the exclusion of phenomena in popular French cannot be justified. Moreover, Bouchard claims that his formulation of *APP* explains the unacceptability of the following sentences.

- (4) a. **Le gars qui qui/que est venu*
 b. **Le gars qui/que que j'ai vu*

In Bouchard's approach, it is not clear why the principle *APP* applies differently in (3) and (4). Clearly, the Avoid Pronoun strategy is not the right way to handle these sentences. Rather, the classical "movement to *COMP* plus deletion of *NP*" of Kayne 1976 could explain both the acceptability of (3) and the impossibility of (4).²

4. A more serious problem for Bouchard's analysis is the way he relates the unacceptability of doubly filled *COMP* in relative clauses to the possibility of such constructions in questions and headless relatives. According

to Bouchard, empty operators do not function in questions (5), and cannot function in headless relatives since there is no head to bind them (6).

- (5) a. *Qui qui est venu?*
 b. *Qui que tu as vu?*
 (6) a. *Qui que ce soit...*
 b. *Qui qui a bu un jour va boire toute sa vie*

On the basis of this evidence, Bouchard does not accept a filter excluding doubly filled *COMP*. He assumes that a *Wh*-phrase in doubly filled *COMP* is not accessible for Binding from outside and must be considered a pronominal. This conclusion may be correct for questions and headless relatives, since the *Wh*-phrase corefers freely (Bouchard 1984: 128). However, as Bouchard 1984: 92 remarks himself, *Wh-PP* in Québec French can be doubled by *que*, which results in a doubly filled *COMP*. This case is a clear exception to Bouchard's claim, since the *Wh-PP* is not a pronominal in the sense of condition A of the Binding theory (Chomsky 1981): the *Wh-PP* is Bound in its governing category.

- (7) *Joséphine_i voyait la fille_j avec qui_{j, i} que Louis était sorti*

Taking Bouchard's claim seriously, one should accept that *Wh-PP* is optionally Bound, depending on the insertion of the optional *que* in Québec French. It seems more fruitful to introduce a condition excluding doubly filled *COMP* in French, together with a dialect-specific restriction on deletion in *COMP* of non-*NP*. As for (5) and (6), independent arguments show that they do not contain instances of doubly filled *COMP*. For (5), Lefebvre 1980: 21 has shown that adjuncts can be introduced between both *Wh*-elements of questions, suggesting that the interrogative element is in a topicalized position outside *S'*.

- (8) *Qui, hier, qui est venu?*

(6a) must be considered a fixed expression, and (6b) should not be analyzed as a headless relative, but as an indefinite pronominal followed by a relative clause. Indefinite *qui* in (6b) should be analyzed on a par with *celui* in (9).

- (9) *Celui qui a bu un jour va boire toute sa vie*

5. A third problem for Bouchard's analysis of French relative clauses is the way he relates his formulation of APP to the unacceptability of *lequel* forms in restrictive relative clauses of *NP*^s. Since Bouchard 1984 considers *lequel* a pronoun, the APP predicts the unacceptability of such sentences,

an empty operator being preferred to a pronoun. The acceptability of *lequel* in nonrestrictives is linked to the fact that the heads of these clauses do not govern the *COMP* position of the relative clauses, since this type of clause is like a parenthetical. The element in *COMP* cannot be Bound as an anaphor, and so a pronoun is possible. But even in Bouchard's formulation of condition B of the Binding theory, a pronoun must be freely indexed at *S*-structure. This is clearly not the case in (10).

- (10) *Théodore_i a rencontré son voisin_j, qui_{j/*i} est un homme très aimable*

But if Bouchard is right in saying that the parenthetical status of nonrestrictive relative clauses prevents government of *COMP* by the antecedent of the relative clause, *lequel* should be contradictorily defined as an ungoverned anaphor in nonrestrictive relative clauses.

6. It will be clear that Bouchard's formulation of the APP as an Elsewhere Principle on anaphors does not explain the peculiarities of French relative clauses. As Iwakura 1985 has shown, similar criticism on Bouchard's Binding Theory seems to hold for his account of obligatory control. Bouchard treats *PRO* in infinitival questions as a pronoun, although it cannot be freely indexed (Iwakura 1985: 36). Consequently, Bouchard's claim for a framework without explicit appeal to empty categories is severely weakened by his characterization of anaphoric phenomena as pronominal with respect to Binding conditions.

Author's address:

Dept. Linguïstiek
Blijde Inkomststraat 21
B-3000 Leuven

NOTES

1) Québec French can strand "strong" prepositions in the relative clause (Bouchard 1984: 92).

- 2) For an alternative analysis within GB, developing the "accusative alternation hypothesis," see Rooryck (forthcoming).
- 3) But see Iwakura 1985.
- 4) Interestingly, Bouchard 1984 quotes three of these authors in his bibliography.
- 5) Damourette and Pichon 1911-1940: §1309 quote some sentences where *lequel* occurs in a restrictive relative clause, but this type of example is rather marginal.

REFERENCES

- Bouchard, Denis. 1984. *On the Content of Empty Categories*, Dordrecht: Foris.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1981. *Lectures on Government and Binding*, Dordrecht: Foris.
- Damourette, Jacques et Edouard Pichon. 1911-1940. *Des mots à la pensée: essai de grammaire de la langue française*, Paris: d'Artrey.
- Frei, Henri. 1929. *La grammaire des fautes*, Paris: Geuthner.
- Guiraud, Pierre. 1966. *Le système du relatif en français populaire*, *Langages* 3, 40-48.
- Iwakura, Kunihiro. 1985. The Binding Theory and PRO, *Linguistic Analysis* 15.2.
- Kayne, Richard. 1976. French relative QUE, in Marta Luján and Fritz Hensey, eds. *Current Studies in Romance Linguistics*.
- Lefebvre, Claire. 1980. Quand se déplace le NP sujet? ou Quand (que) le NP sujet se déplace pas. Voilà la question, *Recherches linguistiques à Montréal* 15, 15-44.
- Moignet, Gérard. 1974. *Etudes de psycho-systématique française*, Paris: Klincksieck.
- Pesetsky, David. 1982. Complementizer-Trace Phenomena and the Nominative Island condition, *The Linguistic review* 1.3.
- Rooryck, Johan. (forthcoming in the *Actes du XVIII^e Congrès International de Linguistique et philologie Romanes 1986*), *Que/qui: pronoms relatifs ou complémentaires?*

Received July 15, 1987.